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ABSTRACT

Leaders of state student associations from 22 states met in July, 1977 in Columbia, Missouri at the first national conference of state student associations. This document represents the consensus of the conference. It is a call to action for Congress, the President, state legislatures, governing boards of colleges and universities, and state student associations themselves on issues important to the American student community. The document contains individual statements which deal with the areas of federal student financial aid appropriations, student consumer information, access to student records, sexual and racial discrimination in postsecondary education, student participation in policy making, full employment and jobs for youth, and tuition and mandatory fees. The state student associations present at this conference are committed to the realization of the goals outlined in this statement. They intend to support their positions with lobby efforts in their respective state capitals, participation in national student lobbying conferences and letter writing campaigns, positive action by student members of college governing boards, and efforts to educate both public officials and the student community. (Author/AM)

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The Missouri Statement:

A STUDENT CALL TO ACTION

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THE MISSOURI STATEMENT

Leaders of 26 state student associations in 22 states met July 28-31 in Columbia, Missouri at the first national conference of state student associations. This statement, which represents the consensus of the conference, is a call to action for Congress, the President, state legislatures, governing boards of colleges and universities, and state student associations themselves on issues important to the American student community.

The state student associations present at the Columbia conference commit themselves to the realization of the goals outlined in this statement with lobby efforts in their respective state capitals, participation in national student lobbying conferences and letter writing campaigns, positive action by student members of college governing boards, and efforts to educate both public officials and the student community.

The overall statement contains individual statements which deal with the areas of federal student financial aid appropriations, student consumer information and access to student records, sexual and racial discrimination in postsecondary education, student participation in policy making, full employment and jobs for youth, and tuition and mandatory fees.

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The Missouri Statement: **A Student Call to Action**

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STUDENT FINANCIAL APPROPRIATIONS

As student leaders from thoughout the country, we are outraged at the action of the Carter Administration regarding the Fiscal Year 1978 budget for student aid programs. The Administration's undermining of a fully-funded Basic Educational Opportunity Grant maximum award ceiling of $1800 means that students will not be able to cope with the rapidly increasing costs of postsecondary education. In light of this, we predict between 50,000 and 80,000 low-income students will be prevented from attending college. Since Basic Grants have been fully-funded the previous two fiscal years, the Administration's misplaced priority of a balanced budget over serving human needs represents a step backwards.

The disregard the Administration has shown for the needs of students in the Fiscal Year 1978 budget is further manifested by:

1. proposed zero funding of National Direct Student Loans before they can become self-perpetuating,
2. proposed zero increases in Special Programs for Students from Disadvantaged Backgrounds (TRIO), and
3. inadequate funding proposals for Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants and College Work-Study.

We find the fiscal Year 1978 budget incompatible with our belief that no person should be denied access to postsecondary education because of financial barriers.

In order to effectively achieve this prinicple of equal access, we strongly urge student financial aid programs for Fiscal Year 1979 be funded at the following levels.

BASIC EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY GRANTS

BEOG should get full funding with a maximum grant of $1800 and the liberalized Family Contribution Schedule proposed by Congress. To ensure that middle-income students do not benefit at the expense of low-income students, full funding for the maximum grant should be the highest priority.

TRIO PROGRAMS - $200 million

Full funding at this level will still only allow 25 percent of the eligible population to be served. These programs have proven effective, and we therefore urge that the authorization level be increased in 1980 to serve the entire eligible population.

COLLEGE WORK-STUDY - $600 million

This is maximum authorization for Fiscal Year 1979 and will fund almost 1.3 million jobs. Through increased funding, this program will be able to expand to create

community service jobs which relate to the students' academic programs. In addition, we strongly oppose the payment of subminimum wages to students participating in the Work-Study Program.

SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY GRANTS - $400 million

This program serves those students with exceptional needs which are not met solely by Basic Grants.

NATIONAL DIRECT STUDENT LOANS - $326.6 million

NDSL's do not duplicate the purposes of Guaranteed Loans because the recipients are generally from low-income family backgrounds. The $326.6 million figure is the FY 78 conference agreements and represents no new growth in the program.

STATE STUDENT INCENTIVE GRANTS - $113.75 million

This program is an especially effective use of federal funds since every dollar spent here is matched dollar for dollar by the state. The $113.75 million represents full funding of initial grants and a commitment to continue present awards at the FY 78 level.

In making these funding requests for the Fiscal Year 1979, early in the budgeting process, we as student leaders charge the Carter Administration to conduct a comprehensive review of student financial aid programs as authorized. Such a review should focus on the FY 1979 budget recommendations and the Education Amendments of 1980. Such a review should be conducted in cooperation with the Congress, national and state student associations, other student groups, postsecondary education institution representatives, and others with a stake in equalizing financial access to college for students and prospective students.

Ensuring access to institutions of higher education is seen as essential for both the prospective student and society as a whole. As former Governor Herbert H. Lehman of New York has said, "If we solve all the problems facing society, but fail to solve the problems of education, our ignorant children will destroy what we bequeath them. However, if we solve only the problems of education, our educated children will solve the problems we have left."

TUITION

It is our belief that **NO** qualified student should be denied access to a postsecondary education because of financial barriers. One of the best ways to achieve this is low tuition. In recent years the rapid rise in student fees and tuition has outpaced the rise of inflation and caused many students to delay or forego their pursuit of a postsecondary education. Students are faced with paying an increasing percentage of the cost of their education. In 1947, students paid 19.8 percent of the cost of their education. By 1972, it rose to 27.7 percent.

More importantly, between 1970 and 1976, the costs of full-time attendance at public and private colleges have increased 56 percent and 54 percent respectively. This compares to a 51 percent rise in the consumer price index.

Student access to education is being denied by these increases. According to a study by the National Commission on the Financing of Postsecondary Education, for every $100 increase in tuition there is an average decline in enrollment of 2.5 percent because of students' inability to pay.

This is reflected by U.S. Census data showing that between 1969 and 1973, there has been about a 20 percent drop in the percentage of 18 to 24 year old dependents from families earning less that $15,000 going to any college on a full-time basis. For those from families over $15,000, there was an 8 percent decline.

The best way to achieve universal access to a postsecondary education is not through a confusing system of hoops and ladders known as financial aid, but through low tuition. It is clear that the students with the greatest need are least likely to know about the financial aid system and its forms, annual needs analysis, and repeated trips to the financial aid offices.

The National Task Force on Student Aid stated: "...the student aid system is fast becoming a victim of its own success. As the volume and variety of needs has increased, the system has proliferated into a luxuriant tangle of programs, policies, and procedures that has become all but impenetrable even to professional aid administrators, let alone to students, the system's beneficiaries."

Suggestions nationally that the low tuition concept be replaced by vastly higher public college tuition coupled with increased financial aid have been clearly addressed by Jacob Stampen of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities in a study of a low tuition experiment. He stated, "The low tuition system has historically demonstrated its ability to provide broad access with minimal bureaucratic supervision. The student aid/high tuition approach would require a large bureaucracy to accomplish the same end, while creating rich opportunities for bureaucratic mischief."

We call upon state student associations and campus student governments to form coalitions with those groups in the American society that benefit from low tuition. Students need to state the case for low tuition to:

1. Women's Organazitions. Women receive less financial aid than men, have less opportunities for work in college, are more likely to be part-time or older, are less likely to qualify for loans, and have a decreased chance of solving problems faced by women if they can't attend college.

2. Unions and Workers' Organizations. The financial aid system puts parents and students with a middle income into a position of extreme hardship if they choose to send more that one child to college.

3. Rural and Farm Families. The financial aid system does not recognize that farmers' high assets are in their land and do not have readily available cash. Also, colleges have been the source for much of the agricultural progress in this country.

4. Minority Families. Many minority families do not qualify for financial aid, many higher education institutions let the burden of help to minorities be based on financial need, and the only way to advance in today's society is through education.

5. Business People. They benefit not only from the highly skilled and educated people who graduate from college but are part of the general economic prosperity caused by an educated society.

6. The Taxpayer. The general economic state of our country is based upon the abilities of its citizens to earn a living and contribute to its economic growth. Access to a postsecondary education for the country's citizens will enable them to contribute to the general welfare instead of live off of it.

This statement has addressed the topic of low tuition. It is easily reasoned that the best form of low tuition is no tuition. State student associations, national student groups, local student governments, and other groups that are in the fight for low tuition should be encouraged to fight for decreased tuition whenever and wherever feasible.

STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION AND STUDENT RECORDS

STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION

Educationknowledgeand information from multiple perspectives spell the difference between rational and reactionary decision-making. To provide information or research oriented toward fulfillment of society's occupational or professional needs without providing information about available educational or personal opportunities is to deny the student the right to make choices and control his or her own life.

Information for students, prospective students, and their families, should be designed primarily to benefit and assist themselves and only secondarily to benefit the information providers, be they institutions, governmental bodies, private organizations, or business.

To this end we make the following recommendations:

1. To meet the need for early awareness of educational opportunities and rights we recommend establishment of a 'national student aid awareness' campaign for prospective students and their families to assist them in planning for education after high school. The campaign should involve students, prospective students, and parent organizations, the very people with the most at stake in educational decisions.

2. To give students a clear picture of what their choices may mean to them we recommend that a national student aid data bank be established to provide prospective students with cost and financial aid information. Such a data bank should also provide information about institutions, programs, and what has happened to former students

3. To meet the need for a simplified financial aid application system, a student or prospective student should be able to file one form for all federal, state, and institutional financial aid. There should be no fee directly charged to the student for this service, as it is a financial, psychological, and administrative barrier to access to public funds.

4. To meet the need for continuing accessible information on choices in education, we recommend that a balanced 'educational and occupational information system' be made available. The information should be available to students in high school, post-

secondary education institutions, and the community, as they make important decisions about their future.

5. To meet the need for uniformity of information we call upon the U.S. Office of Education to clarify that the Student Consumer Information Amendments, recently enacted in the Federal Education Amendments of 1976, require the reporting of information by institutions in comparable formats.

STUDENT RECORDS

Confidentiality of student records is a fundamental right. Confidentiality involves both free access by an individual to his or her own records and control over distribution of such records to others. Since the enactment of the "Buckley" amendment, students have been urged to waive their right to see academic references and recommendations in order to facilitate "better" recommendations either in terms of the writer or the reader. In specific cases this may be true. In general, however, students will again be faced with having to deal with unfounded and uncorrectable information in their files. Therefore:

1. Students should not be encouraged to waive their right to inspect their records, either to facilitate obtaining academic or other references for so-called reasons of candor. Otherwise, institutions which urge optional waiving of rights create climates of coercion which effectively deny students these rights.

2. We call for the President's "Privacy Protection Study Commission" to actively continue its oversight function of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

STUDENTS as SUBJECTS of EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Students, as others in society, have a vital interest in what information is gathered about them and how such information is used. While personal records are protected by the "Buckley" amendment, rights of access to "educational research" materials and statistical information about our institutional faculty and students are ill-defined. Therefore:

1. While the use of accumulated data for research purposes may be justifiable, students should be involved in decisions concerning the use of such data to protect the rights of students as a class of research subjects.

2. Another area where students should be included in the decision is when alternative uses of accumulated information are being considered. For example, students should be involved in weighing the costs and benefits of providing information about students for the market purposes of educational insitiutions and businesses.

STUDENT PEER COUNSELORS

Student peer counselors have often been a conduit of information about financial aid to students. They continue on both a formal and informal basis. The next step is to formalize their positions and provide training opportunities.

Financial aid peer counselors need training to provide the maximum benefit to students. To this end there should be a special component of the Basic Grant Training Project to provide for the training of students and other part-time employees in financial aid offices. State student associations should have the option of bidding on the contract to carry out this component of the workshops.

In addition, the new Federal-State Scholarship Agency training program should specifically provide for the training of student peer counselors. If a state student association wishes to be included in the sponsorship of the training program the state scholarship agency should involve it to the greatest degree possible.

Peer counselors themselves have a personal need for information about career potentials in the field of student services as they explore career alternatives to provide

better information and services for students. A survey sponsored by the Office of Education (OE) or processing organizations should be conducted to identify specific training needs, and career information needs, of student peer counselors and to follow up the present survey by the OE to identify the number of students working in campus financial aid offices.

ROLE of STATE STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS

State student associations can greatly enhance their effectiveness through greater access to and use of student information regarding financial aid/ informational programs/projects. The need is for information on a people/project level rather than a research data level. These resources could be extremely valuable in the selection and implementation of projects by associations and in projects for student government leaders. The existence of a national clearinghouse of information about student and educational projects would be of invaluable aid in performing these functions.

In addition, student associations could aid other agencies in better informing students. The Basic Grant training workshops can be strengthened by the insights a student association can provide. The state scholarship agency's efforts can be aided by an informed student association. The service provided by professional financial aid and peer counselors could be strengthened in much the same fashion.

Thus, given access to information, state student associations could aid public and private information agencies in obtaining and dispensing better information to students.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING

Traditionally students have either been excluded or poorly represented in decisions important to them but made elsewhere in the education community. Present governance structures do too little to protect the student interest in such fundamental determinations as the cost of higher education, academic program requirements and administrative rules.

We recognize that participation in college or university governance, though still important, is no longer the only avenue to student empowerment. Lobbying, litigation and other legal action, public watchdogging, collective bargaining, research and other forms of self-help are now tools that may be used to turn decisions made "about" students into decisions made "with, by and for" students. We encourage student associations everywhere to explore the alternatives to working through governance systems.

In recognition of the more important roles students must play in the educational decision-making process we recommend the following:

STUDENT VOTER PARTICIPATION

We endorse state and federal legislation to relax restrictive voter registration requirements in the spirit of President Carter's Universal Voter Registration Plan. We particularly oppose registration and residency requirements which discriminate against the absentee student voter and the college town resident student voter.

We recognize that student associations have a special responsibility and obligation to provide student voting services such as on-campus voter registration, absentee ballot assistance, on-campus polling places, get-out-the-vote efforts, and voter education on important student, state and national issues and candidates. These projects must be conducted on an ongoing basis.

CONTROL of STUDENT FEES

We endorse and actively support legislation to establish guidelines for autonomous student control of assessment, maintenance and distribution of student fees. To this end we call for an immediate survey of student fee practices and policies across the country sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education.

GOVERNANCE

It is imperative that students be placed on governing boards of colleges and universities with equal standing and all rights and responsibilities of other governing board members including the right to vote. As the consumers of higher education

students have a right to active participation in governance at the highest level and at each major level of policy-making including, but not limited to, administration, curriculum and collective bargaining.

COMMISSION on the STATUS of STUDENTS

In recognition that students are a significant segment of society with unique problems we call for the formation of a Presidential Commission on the Status of Students to examine the American student condition, to educate both government and the American public, and to propose changes in the nature of the student condition to the President. We encourage individual states to take similar action.

STUDENTS on ACCREDITATION TEAMS

We endorse the right of students to have procedural input into any and all formal evaluations that affect their admission, financial assistance, academic standing or any other conditional decisions as to their status based on evaluation. We call for major student involvement in organizations that provide testing for academic placement, financial needs analysis, and other information services to higher education institutions. Student involvement is critically needed in programs that provide information which determines eligibility for financial aid programs directly financed by state and federal funds.

As the consumers of education students should also have a role in all aspects of institutional evaluation including participation on accreditation teams.

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

In 1977, minority students and our nation's minorities in general face an ever-increasing attack against their rights. Students of African, Asian, Latin American, Mexican, and native American descent are the first and hardest hit by the increasing economic crisis. In view of the growing attacks on programs for affirmative action to insure national minority enrollment, the suspension of funding for Black and Bilingual-Bicultural Studies, the trend towards elimination and merger of traditionally black collegesand inadequacy of the funding for those institutions which remain, and an urban youth unemployment rate more than double the national average, we call for the reaffirmation of our commitment to the struggle against racism.

The gains made by minority people of this country in recent years have served the nation as a whole. The gains made by minority groups have opened doors for masses of white students who, because of their socio-economic backgrounds, were also denied the benefits of this country's system of postsecondary education.

The right to education for all people remains limited by a number of barriers to access and unmet needs. Inadequate financial aid to meet the ever-rising costs of attending college is still the major bar to access for poor and minority students. Lack of information about programs, services, and admission requirements remains another critical and unnecessary barrier. Lastly, minority and poor students see institutions as insensitive to their needs and unwilling to take necessary steps to provide equal educational opportunities for all students.

We see the need for a positive and aggressive program by educational institutions, government, and students to eliminate these barriers. Therefore, we make the following recommendations:

1. Outreach programs to the poor, minorities, and older people have worked and can work. In order to fully succeed these programs must be extended nationwide and given full financial support. They also mandate cooperation between secondary, and postsecondary educational institutions.

2. Presently admissions requirements meet the needs of institutions rather than students. Admissions criteria and policies, which use standardized tests that discriminate against low-income, bicultural and bilingual people must be reviewed and revised.

3. High minority student attrition rates are due to the lack of adequate and effective support services and programs for students once they are enrolled. Programs

must be developed to meet such varying needs as special counseling, child care, and academic support services. These programs must be defined, developed, and staffed by people most affected in order to stop the revolving door of minority attrition.

As it applies to the existence and importance of minority admissions programs, minority students view the Bakke case as a sign of institutional resistance to affirmative action. In one state, California, minority population is increasing while minority applications to public postsecondary institutions are declining. This is primarily due to the publicity of the Bakke case. It must be understood that the Bakke case has national implications. We call upon the Justice Department, educational insititutions, and the students to support the existence and importance of minority admissions programs in the appeal of the Bakke case before the Supreme Court in the fall of 1977.

SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION

Women have in the past and continue today to face many of the same barriers as minorities. This statement addresses the problem of sexual discrimination in our nation's postsecondary educational institutions. We have also given serious attention to the role of women as leaders in and out of school.

STATE STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS

At this conference, as at others preceding it, women are considerably underrepresented. The token few that participate seldom occupy positions of leadership. The concept of equal opportunity seems to be wholeheartedly endorsed by student organizations represented here yet women have not, in acceptable numbers, assumed leadership roles either in the contemporary student movement in general or specifically in this weekend's national student forum. The sexual as well as racial composition of this meeting reflects systematic patterns of discrimination within student organizations.

This discrimination, whether intentional or not, signals a need for state student associations to develop internal affirmative action programs.

EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment is fully supported and endorsed by this body, to combat the pervasive discrimination within our economic and social environment. State student associations must join in--not merely support--ratification efforts within their respective states, as a priority.

WOMEN'S DESK

The emphasis of women's issues by several state student associations has demonstrated a critical shortage of timely research data on women's issues. Thus, a student association lobbying state or federal authorities for rational legislation may lack the factual ammunition to fortify logic. There is acute need for an information clearinghouse, for the interchange of ideas, data, and experience.

We, therefore, urge the National Student Association, the National Student Lobby, and the state associations to work cooperatively in the establishment of such a clearinghouse. We believe that a joint women's desk within the national associations is the proper medium for its origination. The necessity of establishing a joint women's desk is itself undebatable.

The desk would serve as a central location for statistical and other types of research data on issues affecting women, especially women students. State associations must have access to the material on request at nominal costs for duplication and postage.

The desk would be a central directory of people, agencies and organizations involved in women's issues. Thus, persons waging similar battles in different states could be placed in contact with one another.

To facilitate a reciprocal flow of information and ideas, there should be a regularly published newsletter serving as the recruitment of support.

CAMPUS CONCERNS

State student associations should next turn their attention to eradicating discrimination on their individual campuses. Sex stereotyping in school curriculum supplies one more disincentive to the pursuit of a college education in either traditional or alternative occupational disciplines.

Women who do enter college lack such basic support services as day care, counseling and access to financial aid information. These services must be established and maintained to guarantee for all women equal access to postsecondary education. In addition, this conference urges the support and development of adequate health facilities, providing free information, access to birth control and gynecological services.

Lack of security on campus imperils all students, but particularly women. Unsafe conditions, such as inadequate lighting, must be remedied to ensure the physical safety and mobility of women.

DEPARTMENT of HEALTH, EDUCATION, and WELFARE

There has been a gross lack of scrutiny regarding the implementation of Title IX and affirmative action guidelines developed by colleges and universities throughout the country. State student associations should monitor these programs with increased vigilance. It is, however, the responsibility of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to investigate upon notification of noncompliance. Complainants must be protected from reprisal by negligent administrations.

As increasing numbers of women become single heads of households their need for higher education becomes imperative. We call upon HEW and the Department of Labor to re-examine the ruling which prevents AFDC mothers with children six-years and older from receiving welfare payments while completing postsecondary education. This ruling clearly adds yet another barrier to open and equal education.

There is need for re-evaluation of financial aid distribution to provide necessary increases for students with dependents. Finally, we advocate the establishment of fully-funded federally approved child care centers on campuses across the nation.

To discuss these concerns, we request a meeting with HEW officials.

STATE ISSUES

Recent Supreme Court decisions on rape and abortion signify a systematic and pernicious retreat from the protection of women's civil rights. The human dignity of women during judiciary proceedings can only be secured through an overhaul of the laws governing rape and its prosecution. Women who have already suffered one assault should not be brutalized a second and third time by police, courts, and other such male dominated groups within our society.

FULL EMPLOYMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS, KENT STATE, ENERGY

FULL EMPLOYMENT

Youth unemployment is rising at twice the national unemployment rate. As a consequence youth unemployment has reached a staggering 60 percent in many urban areas.

In recognition of the seriousness of the problem such organizations as the National Coalition for Economic Justice and Full Employment Action Council have pooled their efforts to secure passage of vital employment legislation now before Congress, including the Humphrey-Hawkins full employment bill and the Harrington full youth employment bill.,

The National Student Association and National Student Lobby have a responsibility to their membership to educate and mobilize students in behalf of this critical youth employment legislation. Student associations across the country must familiarize themselves with this legislation and give their support to its passage on both national and state levels.

Opportunities, such as National Full Employment Week, September 4-10, should become forums for students to call attention to the dilemma of youth unemployment and gather support for full youth employment legislation.

Youth unemployment is a vicious circle. Without jobs for youth students can't afford postsecondary education and without postsecondary education it becomes impossible to find a job. Youths who cannot find jobs today will join and inflate the ranks of the hard core unemployed tomorrow if we do not act now.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Students demand that their governing boards divest themselves of investments in corporations doing business in South Africa where they comply with the apartheid laws. Colleges and universities have invested heavily in the major multinational corporations doing business in South Africa. Students desire to see the higher education community make a strong statement in favor of human rights through divestment of these investments.

KENT STATE

Students endorse legislation and administrative action by the Department of the Interior to preserve the site of the May 4, 1970 shootings on the Kent State campus. We condemn the actions of the Kent State authorities to freeze student government funds (an example of the lack of student autonomy).

ENERGY

The State Student Associations recognize that one immediate problem on both a local and national level is a "crisis" in the availability and irresponsible consumption of energy. Last winter several campuses across the country were closed down for periods of time ranging from several days to a month. This year students are paying tremendously increased fees to pay for energy costs for buildings that are overcooled, overheated, and waste energy. We call on all college university communities to take immediate and effective steps to promote the efficient use of energy and to reduce campus energy consumption.